

1 AN ACT in relation to energy.

2 Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,
3 represented in the General Assembly:

4 Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the
5 Good Samaritan Energy Plan Act.

6 Section 5. Definitions. In this Act:

7 "Department" means the Department of Commerce and
8 Economic Opportunity.

9 "LIHEAP" means the energy assistance program established
10 under the Energy Assistance Act of 1989.

11 Section 10. Legislative findings. The General Assembly
12 finds that high electric and gas bill arrearages are a
13 serious problem for low-income utility consumers in Illinois,
14 often impeding access to service. The General Assembly also
15 finds that the inability to have electric or gas service
16 connected due to high arrearages is a threat to the health
17 and safety of many low-income households in Illinois. The
18 General Assembly further finds that eligibility for LIHEAP
19 does not alleviate the burden of high arrearages for
20 low-income utility consumers and is not enough to enable many
21 households to have electric or gas service connected.

22 Section 15. Good Samaritan Energy Trust Fund. The Good
23 Samaritan Energy Trust Fund is created as a special fund in
24 the State treasury. The Department shall administer the Fund.
25 The Department shall deposit moneys received from the
26 following sources into the Fund:

27 (1) Voluntary donations from individuals,
28 foundations, corporations, and other sources.

29 (2) Proceeds from fundraising events held for the

1 purpose of generating moneys for the Fund.

2 Section 20. Solicitation of contributions to Fund. The
3 Department may insert a fundraising letter requesting
4 voluntary contributions to the Fund in utility bills 2 times
5 each year to solicit contributions to the Fund. All public
6 utilities doing business in the State shall cooperate in
7 allowing the Department to insert fundraising solicitation
8 letters in their utility bills. The solicitation letter from
9 the Department must be sized so as to fit into the utility's
10 standard bill envelope, and must be of sufficiently light
11 weight so as not to cause any increase in postage cost to the
12 utility.

13 Section 25. Administration of Fund. The Department shall
14 administer the Good Samaritan Energy Trust Fund with the
15 advice and consent of the Low Income Energy Assistance Policy
16 Advisory Council established under the Energy Assistance Act
17 of 1989. Donations received for the Fund shall be made
18 available for the purpose of alleviating utility bill
19 arrearages for households determined eligible for LIHEAP,
20 except that the Department may use up to 10% of the moneys
21 donated for the Fund for the expenses of the Department and
22 the local area agency incurred in administering the Fund.
23 Resources from the Fund shall be awarded to local area
24 agencies that have existing contracts with the Department to
25 administer LIHEAP in Illinois.

26 Section 30. Distribution of moneys from Fund. Subject
27 to appropriations made by the General Assembly, the
28 Department may spend moneys from the Good Samaritan Energy
29 Trust Fund for the purpose of providing assistance authorized
30 under Section 25. The Department, with the advice and consent
31 of the Low Income Energy Assistance Policy Advisory Council,

1 shall establish priorities for the distribution of moneys
2 from the Good Samaritan Energy Trust Fund to low-income
3 consumers to enable them to pay gas or electric bill
4 arrearages in order to have household gas or electric utility
5 service connected. Low-income consumers who are unable to
6 have their service connected even with a LIHEAP grant shall
7 be given preference. The Department shall ensure that moneys
8 donated for the Fund (other than moneys used for
9 administrative expenses as authorized in Section 25) are
10 distributed to low-income consumers who reside in the county
11 from which those moneys were received.

12 Section 35. Annual report. On or before May 31 of each
13 year, beginning in 2005, the Department shall provide an
14 annual report to the General Assembly on the use and
15 effectiveness of the Good Samaritan Energy Trust Fund. The
16 report shall include the amount of money deposited into the
17 Fund, the amount of money allocated by the Fund for the
18 direct benefit of low-income consumers, the number of
19 low-income households served by the Fund, by county, and
20 recommendations for improving the operation and effectiveness
21 of the Fund.

22 Section 90. The State Finance Act is amended by adding
23 Section 5.595 as follows:

24 (30 ILCS 105/5.595 new)

25 Sec. 5.595. The Good Samaritan Energy Trust Fund.

26 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon
27 becoming law.